

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## Central Island continues to pace COVID-19 cases on Vancouver Island

**Central Island** — Island Health is urging people to be aware of behaviours and activities that are driving COVID-19 activity in our communities.

While the risk of COVID-19 is present in every community on Vancouver Island, the Central Island region continues to see the highest number of active cases. As of February 10, 157 of the 230 (68%) active cases of COVID-19 within Island Health were in the Central Island region. This includes Greater Nanaimo, the Cowichan Valley, Oceanside, and Alberni-Clayoquot.

While some Local Health Areas, like Cowichan Valley South, have seen their curve flatten and begin to bend down, Greater Nanaimo is continuing a worrying trend with the total number of new cases increasing for four consecutive weeks. For the week of January 31 to February 6, the 93 new cases in Greater Nanaimo were nearly double the number from the previous week (See data below and attached).

People should be reassured that our contact tracing investigations are generally not finding widespread community transmission, meaning Public Health is generally able to identify where people acquired their infection and in the large majority of situations it is linked to known cases or clusters. However, Public Health teams have noted an increase in the number of contacts being reported by cases, and references to larger and more frequent social gatherings.

We know COVID-19 spreads when people have close contacts with others and this continues to drive transmission across Vancouver Island.

It is imperative that people:

- Stick to their household. Even small gatherings can increase the risk of transmission;
- You can go for a walk with someone outside your household, as long as it does not turn into a group of people meeting outside;
- Outdoor gatherings involving multiple households without masks or appropriate distancing do not represent a safe way to socialize;
- Do not share things like vape pens or pods, cigarettes, drinks, or food;
- If you have symptoms, stay home and get a COVID-19 test;
- Even if you have a negative test, it is important to stay home while symptoms are present.

If you require testing, call 1-844-901-8442 between 8:30 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., seven days a week to book an appointment.

Get informed about COVID activity in your region and community.

Island Health’s daily COVID-19 Data Dashboard, outbreaks, and public exposure information is available [here](#).

BC Centre for Disease Control data, including weekly case counts broken down by Local Health Area, is available [here](#).

More information is available at [www.islandhealth.ca/covid19](http://www.islandhealth.ca/covid19).

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LHA	Week of Jan 3 - Jan 9	Week of Jan 10 - Jan 16	Week of Jan 17 - Jan 23	Week of Jan 24 - 30	Week of Jan 31 - Feb 6	Total
Alberni-Clayoquot	1	1	4	14	7	27
Cowichan Valley North	4	4	16	11	8	43
Cowichan Valley South	53	74	74	52	21	274
Cowichan Valley West	0	0	1	9	1	11
Greater Nanaimo	31	27	42	48	93	241
Oceanside	2	1	5	3	9	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>477</b>

